

complex system makes it hard to get results, the results we want, which is an educated workforce, people educated to meet the needs of the 21st century.

The House of Representatives—and Davis was very much involved in this—passed a bill that includes the reforms I'm talking about. And the Senate must act so that we can better get unemployed people back to work in America, so that we can make sure as our economy changes, the workforce changes with it.

Technologies race through our economy, and as they do so, the workforce can become much more productive. But the problem is, is that unless there is a concerted, focused effort to help our citizens stay up with technological change, people will be left behind. And that's not what we want in America. We want an educated workforce to keep this country the most productive in the world. And with the right focus and the right policies out of the United States Congress, this is an objective that I'm confident we can achieve, because I believe this country can achieve everything—anything we set our mind to. I believe in the greatness of America. And our greatness is not just our military might. We're great at that, by the way, but that's not our greatness. Our greatness is the ability for the American people to rise to any challenge. That is our greatness.

Look what we've been through. We've been through a terrorist attack and a national emergency; we've been through a recession; we've been through corporate scandals where CEOs forgot what it means to

be a responsible citizen. People didn't tell the truth. They were not responsible to their shareholders and employees. They will be held to account for their irresponsible behavior. And that was a shock to our system. We've been through war.

And yet we're a strong nation and we're a confident nation, because we're a nation full of people who are hard-working and dedicated, people who love freedom, people who love our country, people who are responsible citizens.

But most importantly, we're a nation that is made up of compassionate people who care deeply when one of us hurts. There's a lot of people in this Nation who want to help those who are looking for work. The Federal Government has a role. The people who are involved in education have a role. Employers have a role. But the thing that gives me most heart is that the nature of the American person—the American people is such that when we face a challenge, we will rise to that challenge on an individual basis and a collective basis.

This is a fabulous country called America, and I'm proud to be your President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 a.m. in the Ernst Community Cultural Center. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Templin, president, Northern Virginia Community College; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Honoring NCAA Winter Champion Teams

June 17, 2003

Thanks for coming to the White House on Champions Day, the day we honor our Nation's champs.

I first want to say that, obviously, you know how to play hoops in the East—[laughter]—as our Texas teams found out.

[*Laughter*] And it seems like Minnesota is pretty good at hockey too.

I now know why we've got all these Senators from New York and Minnesota and Connecticut, as well as Members of the House from those three States. Welcome, and thank you all for honoring these fine student athletes. We're glad you're here.

I want to welcome the University of Connecticut women's basketball team back to the White House. Geno told me last time that—last time I greeted them here—that they would be back. He really didn't say it that way; we'll play like he said it that way—makes a better story. [*Laughter*] At any rate, congratulations to you all. I appreciate Jeffrey Hathaway coming as well. These ladies can flat play basketball, and they are a great credit to women's athletics and to sport. They'll probably be back next year too. We're really glad you're here, and I'm glad Diana has given me the jersey. She is—thank God I don't have to guard her. [*Laughter*]

I also want to welcome the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities men's hockey team back here again as well. I appreciate Don Lucia. I want to thank the athletic director, Joel Maturi, as well for coming. It's good to see these men back. They also know how to play hockey really well. They told me they'd be back again next year. Senator Dayton was a heck of a goalie in his day, but I don't know if he could stop these guys or not. [*Laughter*] I know the State of Minnesota is proud of your accomplishments. We're really glad you're here.

And we're also glad that the ladies' hockey team from the University of Minnesota-Duluth is here. It's good to see Dr. Martin. Thank you for coming back—as well as Shannon Miller. She's been the coach for 4 years and has won three national championships. It sounds like to me, Dr. Martin, you'd better give her a raise. [*Laughter*] It's a State issue, of course. [*Laughter*] But congratulations to you all.

I also want to congratulate Syracuse for winning their first national championship.

It's a great tribute to Jim Boeheim, who is a heck of a guy and a great leader of men. Congratulations, Coach. I know you've worked hard for this. If it wasn't the University of Texas, I'm glad it was you. [*Laughter*] You've got some great players on your team. I'm sure some of us are going to be asking Carmelo Anthony for a loan one of these days—[*laughter*]—so keep the interest rates low. [*Laughter*] But congratulations on winning a tough tournament. You're a great credit to the sport.

I also want to welcome Mike Tirico, who is here. Where are you, Mike? Oh, there you are. Congratulations on being a Syracuse grad. I know you were objective in your analysis of the—[*laughter*]—of the tournament. But thanks for coming.

I—one of the things I really appreciate about these days is that, when you welcome these champs, is that it reminds people of the basics of life, the need to serve something greater than yourself in life. Championship teams don't win because of a star. Championship teams win because people are willing to work together for a greater good, in this case, the team. Championship teams win because people are willing to work hard and sacrifice for something important. These are values that are really important not only in sport but in life as well.

The other thing that's important about a championship team is to—for people to understand that you can be a champ on the court or on the ice as well as off the court and off the ice.

I've asked Dr. Martin if she remembered what I said last year about people serving their communities in which they live. She said, "You bet. We've got girls on our team who are mentoring." One girl said she works for the Boys and Girls Club.

My call to the champs is to be a champ off the playing—when you're not playing as well. You've got a chance to make a difference in somebody's life. There's always some little kid draped over the—

draped over the ice, looking at the star Minnesota players, wondering what it's like to be a star. And a star is somebody who sets a good example. A star is somebody who says, "I've got some God-given talents, and I want to help somebody else utilize his or her talents so they can realize the American Dream." There's always some little guy hanging around or some girl hanging around courtside watching champs, watching behavior. And you have a chance as champions to set such a good example for America's young, so that the next generation of athletes will know what it means to be a champ on the court or on the rink as well as off the court and off the rink.

And so I'm here today to congratulate you for setting such a good example. Now that the spotlight is on you, assume responsibility. Do your job as an American. Love

somebody just like you'd like to be loved yourself, and America will be a better place for it.

Welcome to the White House. May God bless your talents, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Geno Auriemma, women's basketball head coach, Jeffrey Hathaway, athletic director-designate, and Diana Taurasi, player, University of Connecticut; Don Lucia, men's hockey head coach, University of Minnesota; Kathryn A. Martin, chancellor, University of Minnesota-Duluth; Carmelo Anthony, men's basketball player, Syracuse University; and Mike Tirico, sports commentator for ESPN and ABC.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception *June 17, 2003*

Thank you all. I would say take a seat, but—[laughter] Thanks for coming. There's nothing like having a few friends over for a cocktail or two. [Laughter]

I appreciate you all being here. I had an uneventful ride over from the White House; nobody got hurt, and my Segway is parked outside. [Laughter]

I do want to thank you all for coming. Your support is laying the groundwork for a strong nationwide effort next year. Your support is going to help us achieve a strong nationwide victory.

I want to thank you for your help tonight. I want to thank you for what you're going to do as well. I want to thank you for helping to invigorate the grassroots all across this country. I want to thank you for the phone calls you'll make, for the signs you'll put up in the yard, and for

helping spread the positive message of this administration.

The political season will come in its own time. Right now, this administration is focused on the people's business. We've got a lot on the agenda. We will continue to earn the confidence of the American people by keeping this Nation prosperous, strong, and secure.

I want to thank Marv and Doro for reading the introductions just like I wrote them. [Laughter] I really am sorry that one member of our family is not here, the great First Lady of the United States. She sends her best. Now that she's not here, I can tell you I am incredibly proud of the job she is doing. She is a strong, steady, gracious First Lady. And I say, "Now that she's not here"—she'd probably be angry with me for bragging on her.